

Nov. 2009 Tree commission minutes

Present: Jim Larson, Margi Preus, Judy Gibbs, Ethan Perry, Kelly Fleissner, Rick Gitar

Absent: Christine Penney, Deb Anderson, Brian Allen

Guests: Doug Stevens, Skyline Planning & Preservation Alliance
Scott Sannes, SHE, Inc. Sky Harbor; Allyz Kramer, SHE, Sky Harbor; Brian Ryks,
Duluth Airport Authority

Jim Larson acted as chair

Meeting called to order at 7:07

Meeting began with guests' issues

Sky Harbor Airport:

Jim reviewed what's been happening at Sky Harbor Airport and explained that we need to discuss our concerns now so those concerns can find their way into the EA

- 3 options:
 - o no action, would probably require closure of airport
 - o moving the runway back 300 feet and extending runway out into the harbor, 2600 feet instead of 3000 feet. Would be operational and operational at night
 - o bending runway toward bay area; shifting of runway,
- great deal of expense for bending runway
- more work needs to be done before we can have final knowledge
- problems
- FAA won't require work in the transitional zone, but will require work in the glide path

Questions

- growth rate of trees, so as to project how many more trees will be affected in the future?
- management plan for the above? trimming, etc?
- survival of topped trees—some trees will need major topping; some will not need very much (at first, anyway)
- impacts of wind throw, drying of the stand which will cause mortality?
- Kelly brought up the issue of bark beetles, which exist there. When a stand is healthy, they can resist beetles, but if/when trees are stressed, will the beetles
- seed cones—will they be impacted?
- Ethan – evaluate not just # of trees, but what % of canopy will be impacted (canopy will be reduced by what %?)
- also aesthetics
- birds?
- what % of the stand are we actually talking about? (might be able to deduced from an arial photo)

Allyz brought up a few items from their meeting

- expected mortality over time because of age of trees and because of topping
- bark beetle: she has talked to two people from DNR forestry about getting qualitative data from them about possible impacts
- as the EA is being developed, they will include the tree commission in the process (every 6-8 weeks as results are coming through)

Brian Ryks

- In reference to the transitional zone (7-1 slopes that go up from runway) he thinks the FAA expects the trans. zone to be cleared as well, but the glide zone is to be taken care of first. Light poles have been raised because of tree growth—maybe FAA will ease reg. on trans. zone because of lights? Scott says FAA won't back off regs until the EA is finished.
- Ethan asked if trees were cleared for lights, if so, surrounding trees could be examined for bark beetles
- Margi – find out anecdotal evidence of blow-down after cutting (fence?)
- Kelly- has anybody studied the similarity of WI Point forest w/P.P.?
- Bark beetle: has city done any evaluation of it? Kelly: his personal observation, but it hasn't been quantified. Allyz: even anecdotal evidence would be useful
- Brian Ryks: airport authority is looking for a resolution soon and a long term resolution; doesn't want the EA to drag on.

Doug Stevens

- Hawk Ridge group
- Gail Corrier (?) w/SHT would like to be involved
- suggests taking a ride along Skyline w/2 members of Tree Commission and 2 members of SPA
- Kelly: owners of adjacent land need to be identified because what the city owns varies widely
- Judy suggested getting maps from the city of Skyline that will show what is private v. public property.
- Kelly will get the map and contact Doug
- Doug hopes that all groups can be involved and in the loop, so everyone knows what's going on, should they be so fortunate to get funding

Judy's Green Corps report

- working on two grants:
- 1) w/St Louis Conservation District applying through MN dept of Ag. to deal with EAB, partnering with Proctor and Hermantown, focusing on a couple of watersheds. Due this Friday. EAB originally came from shipping and
 - o \$40-50,000.Knowlton, Kingsbury, Miller creeks chosen because they connect Duluth w/Proctor, Hermantown
- 2) another grant dealing w/Storm Water issues (Coastal Grant)

A motion was made and passed to approve a letter of support for these grants, to be written by Christine.

Ethan reported that "things are happening." –

- new info on EAB on DNR website –w/ lots of links, geared for local governments including sample language for ordinance language.
- Ethan will look it over and see if it should be included in our ordinance
- on their website look for: DNR/Forestry/Urban

Spirit Mountain Alpine Slide: questions about losing "significant trees" but Ethan pointed out that currently the city does not have a definition of that (but our ordinance does.)

Kelly's report

- working with Judy on grants
- Judy and Kelly will attend the monthly Shade Tree meeting

Jim

- re-caged the trees at Brighton Beach and bud capped trees on Chester; discussion of bud capping trees at Hartley.

October Minutes approved

Meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.